# FRECKLES

By

## Gene Stratton-Porter



*PROLOGUE.*

***This romance of Freckles and the Angel of the Limberlost is one of the most novel, entertaining, wholesome and fascinating stories that have come from the pen of an American author in many years. The characters in this sylvan tale are:***

***— Freckles, a plucky waif who guards the Limberlost timber leases and dreams of angels.***

***The Swamp Angel, in whom Freckles' sweetest dream materializes.***

***McLean, a member of a lumber company, who befriends Freckles.***

***Mrs. Duncan, who gives mother love and a home to Freckles.***

***Duncan, head teamster of McLean's timber gang.***

***The Bird Woman, who is collecting camera studies of birds for a book.***

***Lord and Lady O'More, who come from Ireland in quest of a lost relative.***

***The Man of Affairs, brusque of manner, but big of heart.***

***Wessner, a timber thief who wants rascality made easy.***

***Black Jack, a villain to whom thought of repentance comes too late.***

### CHAPTER I.

THE LIMBERLOST GUARD.

FRECKLES came down the corduroy that crosses the lower end of the Limberlost. At a glance he might have been mistaken for a tramp, but he was intensely eager to belong somewhere and to be attached to almost any sort of enterprise that would furnish him food and clothing.

Long before he came in sight of the camp of the Grand Rapids Lumber company he could hear the cheery voices of the men and the neighing of the horses, and could scent the tempting odors of cooking food. A feeling of homeless friendlessness swept over him. He turned into the newly made road and followed it to the camp.

The men were jovially calling back and forth as they unharnessed tired horses that fell into attitudes of rest and crunched, in deep content, the grain given them. As he wiped the flanks of his big bays with handfuls of papaw leaves, Duncan, the brawny Scotch head teamster, softly whistled, "Oh wha will be my dearie, Oh!" and a cricket under the leaves at his feet accompanied him. Wreathing tongues of flame wrapped about the black kettles, and, when the cook lifted the lids gusts of savory odors escaped.

Freckles approached him.

"I want to speak to the boss," he said.

The cook glanced him over and answered carelessly, "He can't use you."

The color flooded Freckles' face, but he said simply, "If you will be having the goodness to point him out we will give him a chance to do his own talking."

With a shrug of astonishment, the cook led the way to a broad, square shouldered man. "Mr. McLean, here's another man wanting to be taken on the gang, I suppose," he said.

"All right," came the cheery answer. "I never needed a good man more than I do just now."

"No use of your bothering with this fellow," volunteered the cook. "He has but one hand."

The flush on Freckles' face burned deeper. His lips thinned to a mere line. He lifted his shoulders, took a step forward, and thrust out his right arm, from which the sleeve dangled empty at the wrist.

"That will do, Sears," came the voice of the boss sharply. "I will interview my man when I have finished this report."

Freckles stood one instant as he had braced himself to meet the eyes of the manager, then his arm dropped and a wave of whiteness swept over him. The boss had not even turned his head to see the deformity pointed out to him. He had used the possessive. When he said "my man" the hungry heart of Freckles went reaching out after him. The boy drew a quivering breath. Then he whipped off his old hat and beat the dust from it carefully. With his left hand he caught the right sleeve, wiped his sweaty face, and tried to straighten his hair with his fingers. He broke a spray of ironwort beside him and used the purple blossoms to beat the dust from his shoulders and limbs.

McLean was a Scotchman. The men of his camps had never known him to be in a hurry or to lose his temper. Discipline was inflexible, but the boss always was kind. He shared camp life with his gangs. The only visible signs of his great wealth consisted of a big, shimmering diamond stone of ice and fire that glittered and burned on one of his fingers and the dainty, beautiful, thoroughbred mare he rode.

No man of McLean's gangs could honestly say that he had ever been overdriven or underpaid. They all knew that up in the great timber city several millions stood to his credit.

He was the only son of that McLean who had sent out the finest ships ever built in Scotland. That his son should carry on this business after his death had been the father's ambition. He sent the boy through Edinburgh university and Oxford and allowed him several years' travel.

Then he was ordered through southern Canada and Michigan to purchase a consignment of tall, straight timber for masts and down into Indiana for oak beams. The young man entered these mighty forests, parts of which still lay untouched since the dawn of the morning of time. The intense silence, like that of a great empty cathedral, fascinated him. He gradually learned that to the shy wood creatures that darted across his path or peeped inquiringly from leafy ambush he was brother. He found himself approaching, with a feeling of reverence, those majestic trees that had stood through ages of sun, wind and snow. Soon it became a difficult thing to fell them. When he had filled his order and returned home he was amazed to find that in the swamps and forests he had lost his heart, and it was calling, forever calling him.

When he inherited his father's property he promptly disposed of it and, with his mother, founded a home in a splendid residence in the outskirts of Grand Rapids. With three partners he organized a lumber company. His work was to purchase, fell and ship the timber to the mills. Marshall managed the milling process and passed the lumber on to the factory. From the lumber Barthol made beautiful and useful furniture, which Uptegrove scattered all over the world from a big wholesale house.

McLean faced a young man, still under twenty, tall, spare, heavily framed, thickly freckled and red haired, with a homely Irish face, but in the steady gray eyes, straightly meeting his searching ones of blue, there were unswerving candor and a look of longing not to be ignored.

"You are looking for work?" questioned McLean.

"Yis," answered Freckles.

"I am very sorry," said the boss, "but there is only one man I want at present—a good, big fellow with a stout heart and a strong body. I hoped that you would do, but I am afraid you are too young and hardly strong enough."

"And what was it you thought I might be doing?" asked Freckles.

The boss could scarcely repress a start. Somewhere back of accident and poverty had been an ancestor who used cultivated English, even with an accent. The boy spoke in a mellow Irish voice, sweet and pure. It was scarcely definite enough to be called brogue, yet there was a trick in the turning of the sentence, the wrong sound of a letter here and there, that was almost irresistible to McLean. He was of foreign birth, and, despite years of alienation, in times of strong feeling he fell into inherited slips of accent and construction.

"It's no child's job," answered McLean. "I am the field manager of a lumber company. We have just leased 2,000 acres of the Limberlost. Many of these trees are of great value. We can't leave our camp, six miles south, for almost a year yet, so we have blazed a trail and strung barbed wires securely about the extent of this lease. Before we return to our work I must put this Limberlost lease in the hands of a reliable, brave, strong man who will guard it every hour of the day and sleep with one eye open at night. I should require the entire length of the trail to be walked at least twice every day, to make sure that our lines were up and no one had been trespassing."

"But why wouldn't that be the finest job in the world for me?" pleaded Freckles. "I am never sick. I could walk the trail twice, three times every day, and I'd be watching sharp all the while."

"It's because you are little more than a boy, and this will be a trying job for a work hardened man," answered McLean. "You would be afraid. In stretching our lines we killed six rattlesnakes almost as long as your body and as thick as your arm. You would always be alone, and the Limberlost is alive with sounds and voices. I don't pretend to say what all of them come from, but from a few slinking forms I've seen and hair raising yells I've heard I'd rather not confront their owners myself, and I am neither weak nor fearful.

"Worst of all, any man who will enter the swamp to mark and steal timber is a desperate fellow. One of my employees at the south camp, John Carter, compelled me to discharge him for a number of serious reasons. He entered the swamp alone and marked a number of valuable trees that he was endeavoring to sell to our rival company when we secured the lease. He has sworn to have these trees if he has to die or to kill others to get them."

"But if he came to steal trees wouldn't he bring teams and men enough, that all any man could do would be to watch and be after you?" queried the boy.

"Yes," replied McLean.

"Then why couldn't I be watching just as closely and coming as fast as an older, stronger man?"

"Why, by George, you could!" exclaimed McLean. "I don't know that the size of a man would be half so important as his grit and faithfulness. What is your name?"

Freckles grew a shade whiter, but his eyes never faltered.

"Freckles," he said.

"Good enough for every day," laughed McLean, "but I can scarcely put Freckles on the company's books."

"I haven't any name," replied the boy.

"I don't understand," said McLean.

"I was thinking from the voice and the face of you that you wouldn't," said Freckles slowly.

"Does it seem to you that any one would take a newborn baby and row over it until it was bruised black, cut off its hand and leave it out in a bitter night on the steps of a charity home to the care of strangers? That's what somebody did to me.

"The home people took me in, and I was there the full legal age and several years over. They could always find homes for the rest of the children, but nobody would ever be wanting me on account of me arm."

"Were they kind to you?" asked McLean.

"I don't know," answered Freckles. The reply sounded so hopeless even to his own ears that he hastened to qualify it by adding: "You see, it's like this, sir. Kindnesses that people are paid to lay off in job lots and that belong equally to several hundred others ain't going to be soaking into any one fellow much."

"Go on," said McLean.

"There's nothing worth the taking of your time to tell," replied Freckles. "The home was in Chicago, and I was there all me life up to three months ago. When I was too old for the training they gave to the little children they sent me out to the nearest ward school as long as the law would let them, but I was never like any of the other children, and they all knew it. I'd to go and come like a prisoner and be working about the home early and late for me board and clothes. I always wanted to learn mighty bad, but I was glad when that was over.

"Then a new superintendent sent me down in the state to a man he said he knew that needed a boy. He wasn't for remembering to tell that man that I was a hand short, and he knocked me down. Between noon and that evening he and his son, about my age, had me in pretty much the same shape in which I was found in the beginning, so I lay awake that night and ran away. I'd like to have squared me account with that boy before I left, but I didn't dare for fear of waking the old man, and I knew I couldn't handle the two of them, but I'm hoping to meet him alone some day before I die."

McLean liked the boy all the better for this confession.

"I didn't even have to steal clothes to get rid of starting in me home ones," Freckles went on, "for they had already taken all me clean, neat things for the boy and put me into his rags, and that went almost as sore as the beatings, for where I was we were always kept tidy and sweet smelling anyway. I hustled clear into this state before I learned that man couldn't have kept me if he'd wanted to. I commenced hunting work, but it is with everybody else just as it is with you, sir. Big, strong, whole men are the only ones for being wanted."

"I have been studying over this matter," answered McLean. "I am not so sure but that a man no older than you and like you in every way could do this work very well if he were not a coward."

"If you will give me a job where I can earn me food, clothes and a place to sleep," said Freckles, "if I can have a boss to work for like other men, and a place I feel I've a right to I will do what you tell me or die trying."

He said it so quietly and convincingly that McLean found himself answering: "I will enter you on my payrolls. We'll have supper, and then I will provide you with clean clothing, wading boots, wire mending apparatus and a revolver. The first thing in the morning I will take you over the trail myself. All I ask of you is to come to me at once at the south camp and tell me like a man if you find this job too hard for you. It is work that few men would perform faithfully. What name shall I put down?"

Freckles' eyes never left McLean's face, and the boss saw the swift spasm of pain that swept his lonely, sensitive face.

"I haven't any name," he said stubbornly, "no more than one somebody clapped on to me when they put me on the home books, with not the thought or care they'd named a house cat. What they called me is no more my name than it is yours. I don't know what mine is, and I never will. But I am going to be your man and do your work, and I'll be glad to answer to any name you choose to call me. Won't you please be giving me a name, Mr. McLean?"

The boss wheeled abruptly and began stacking his books. In a voice harsh with huskiness he spoke,

"I will tell you what we will do, my lad," he said. "My father was my ideal man, and I loved him better than any other I have ever known. He went out five years ago. If I give to you the name of my nearest kin and the man I loved best—will that do?"

"WON'T YOU PLEASE BE GIVING ME A NAME?"

Freckles' rigid attitude relaxed. His head dropped, and tears splashed down on the soiled calico shirt.

"All right," said McLean. "I will write it on the roll—James Ross McLean."

"Thank you mightily," said Freckles. "That makes me feel almost as if I belonged already."

Freckles' heart and soul were singing for joy.

(Continued next week.)

## WHITE HEADED MATCH— A LITTLE CRIMINAL

The poet tells us there are sermons in stones. Why not sermons in matches? What a wonderful little thing the match really is. How excellently it performs its service for man. How far beyond the steel and flint of our forefathers. Boxes of matches come into our homes every day, as a matter of course. The latest are often the very acme of perfection. The more easily they light and the more noiseless the better we like them.

Man would not consciously maim or kill his fellow man and yet we have been partners with the little criminal match in doing just that. Here is the point of the matter. Most of the matches we use contain a form of phosphorus that is poisonous and brings injury to many of the laborers who make them. We have been unconscious of this until the awakened sense of justice has called for a change, and we shall soon be able to use our matches with a clear conscience.

Who can remember the first match? It was the old brimstone, a splinter of pine dipped in sulphur and lighted by a spark from the steel and flint. It never did any harm. Then came the match with head composed of chlorate of potash, sulphur, powdered sugar with gum to hold the mixture together and coloring matter to tint it. This match was lighted by bringing in contact with a little sulphuric acid and called the instantaneous light box. This was also harmless.

About 1835 came the lucifer match, the first one to light by friction, the match that "strikes anywhere." Its head was first made of sluphuretto of antimony, chlorate of potash, with gum and coloring matter. A little later phosphorus began to be used in the head of this match combined with nitre, or sulphur and chlorate of potash. This was the beginning of the match's criminal career. The form of the phosphorus that is harmful is the yellow or the white. It is cheaper than other materials and strikes easily, hence has been in increasing demand. Most of our parlor or friction matches have contained the white phosphorus, and those are the matches most in use. The safety match is harmless because it contains no phosphorus in the head but has a non poisonous form of phosphorus on the surface against which it is scratched. This is not much used however as it is less convenient. There is a substitute for white phosphorus called sesquisulphide of phosphorus which is used in France and is now available in the United States. This compound was at first a patent property of the Diamond Match Company but through the pressure of public opinion, the influence of President Taft and the broadmindedness of this so called trust, the patent right was relinquished and the substitute may be used in any match factory in the country.

The white phosphorus that did such harm, gave off poisonous gases, that entering the mouth of the laborer working with it, caused the bones of the jaw to be destroyed and left the person deformed for life, unable to take solid food and often causing death itself. Many attempts were made to improve conditions in match factories but none entirely removed the danger. The greater cheapness of the poisonous substance prevented its removal, because of competition, until it was prohibited to all.

For some years the white phosphorus has been prohibited in the matchmaking countries of Europe and in April of 1912 a bill passed our Congress practically doing away with its use in the United States by placing a prohibitive internal revenue on the manufacture of white phosphorus matches. The bill does not go into effect until July of 1913, in order that the manufacturers may adjust themselves to the change. Should it be necessary to use a match that scratches a little harder and costs a family perhaps five cents more a year we must all agree that it is infinitely better than to be party to the crime of maiming and destroying the lives of our fellow beings. All credit should be given the American Bureau of Labor and to an organization entitled the American Association for Labor Legislation for their vigilant investigations into the subject, for the arousing of public opinion and the successful close of the campaign.

So much for the sermon of the little match; and now for the conclusion. Ought not the consumer to realize more fully than he generally does his possible complicity in social wrongs and the power he has in his hands to right them if he will let the things that come into his daily life tell him their story and win from him his cooperation.

James R. Robertson.

## THE CITIZEN AND THE SCHOOL

Four months ago there were more than three hundred young people in Berea who were working together with the idea of fitting themselves to teach school. Today they are scattered over this and other states, far from each other, out of reach of teachers and Library, soon to begin the most serious task of which a young person can bend his or her energy,—the training of children for the work of life.

When the school is secured, there comes a feeling of relief on the part of the young teacher, especially, which often eases the feelings of responsibility which should ever be present, and in too many cases the teacher of years of experience, because of having gone through the battle with ignorance all alone so often, looks upon the matter with something akin to indifference.

Because of the difficulties growing out of the loneliness of the one room teacher, the writer has secured from the editor of The Citizen the privilege of conducting a Teacher's Department, devoted to the interests of education in the districts where communication with one's fellow workers is most difficult. The matter is stated in this way because what will fit the conditions there will largely apply to all rural schools, while discussions carried on with the graded school, or the most favorably situated one room school in mind will often leave the problems of the less favored ones unsolved.

The greatest need of the rural school, as well as the rural people in general, is a closer cooperation. That this may be made possible we are calling upon the teachers to join hands thru The Citizen this fall, that we may keep step in our schools as we did in our classes. Of course the purpose of such a Department would be made possible of attainment only by the paper reaching a large number of teachers every week. While it already goes to many, it must go to many more before the space required for the contemplated school work can rightly take the place of the other matter that is crowding for admission. In order to justify its existence, then, we are asking as many teachers as are interested in exchanging ideas, and receiving inspiration and advice from their former teachers and other friends of the schools and the children, to send in their subscriptions to The Citizen as soon as possible. Every former Berea Normal student will receive a letter in regard to the rates and the advantages of the proposed Department within a few days, while others may send their orders directly to The Citizen.

Whatever the number of new teachers who take advantage of this means of securing aid and advice in their work may be, the Teacher's Department will start with the first issue in July, when the schools start, and will continue six months if the interest manifested is enough to at all justify its continuance.

Let every former Berea student who is teaching join this enterprise and make it a means of greatly increasing the efficiency of the work done this year by our getting and keeping in step with each other. Send your ideas, your troubles, your ambitions, any thing which will relieve you, or help you, or do either to a fellow worker in this greatest cause, to,

Your friend and well wisher,

C. D. Lewis.

## CARNEGIE ON DRINKING HABIT

Mr. Andrew Carnegie, whose own experience fits him to speak with authority as to the elements that make for a successful business career, says in his book "The Empire of Business:"

The first and most seductive peril, and the destroyer of most young men, is the drinking of liquor. I am no temperance lecturer in disguise, but a man who knows and tells you what observation has proved to him; and I say to you that you are more likely to fail in your career from acquiring the habit of drinking liquor, than from any or all the other temptations likely to assail you. You may yield to almost any other temptation and reform—may brace up, and if not recover lost ground, at least remain in the race, and secure and maintain a respectable position. But from the insane thirst for liquor, escape is almost impossible. I have known but few exceptions to this rule.

## THE QUIET HOUR

By G. W. K.

"There are loyal hearts, there are spirits brave;
There are souls that are pure and true;
Then give to the world the best you have,
And the best will come back to you.

"Give love, and to your heart will flow,
A strength in your utmost need;
Give faith, and a score of hearts will show
Their faith in your word and deed.

"Give truth, and your gift will be paid in kind,
And honor will honor meet;
And a smile that is sweet will surely find
A smile that is just as sweet.

"For life is the mirror of king and slave,
It's just what we are and do;
Then give to the world the best you have
And the best will come back to you."

## CAPT. W. B. CAPERTON

Captain Caperton has been assigned to duty as commandant of the naval station at Narragansett bay and the second naval district, including the naval training station, naval war college and torpedo station.